

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY 371st  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS March 28, 2013**

**A meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority (hereinafter referred to as "Authority", the "CCA" or the "Board") was held on March 28, 2013 at 9:00 am at the Rhode Island Convention Center, pursuant to notice, at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Board members present were Chairman James Bennett, Commissioners, Bernie Buonanno, Patrick Butler, Joseph DeLorenzo, Letitia Carter, George Nee, Jeffrey Hirsh, Scott Gunn and Paul MacDonald.**

**Mr. Israel and Ms. Venturini were unable to attend.**

**Also present were James P. McCarvill, Executive Director, Kim Keough and Betty Sullivan, Rhode Island Convention Center Authority; Tim Muldoon, Debbie Tuton, John McGinn and Kathy Masino, Convention Center; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Cohen and Beth Johnson, Dunkin' Donuts Center; Dan Schwartz, The VETS; Martha Sheridan, PWCVB; Steve Maceroni, PFM; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; Gregg Stack and Bob Eaton, State Budget Office; Joe Solomon, House Policy Office; Robert Bromley, Senate Fiscal Office; Amber Ilcisko, Assistant to Jim Bennett and Eileen Smith, Recording Secretary.**

**Chairman Bennett called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM. Chairman Bennett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February Board Meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. MacDonald and seconded by Mr. Gunn it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to approve the minutes of the February meeting.**

**Chairman Bennett asked Mr. McCarvill to present the financial information. Mr. McCarvill reported that for the month of February the Convention Center's net income variance was (\$224,130) to budget and (\$192,234) to the prior year. Year to date net income variance at the Convention Center was (\$544,471) to budget and (\$337,376) to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill stated that the unfavorable variance is due to lower than expected Event, Food and Beverage and Ancillary Revenues due to the non-occurrence of budgeted events such as the Verizon sales meeting and the Motorcycle Expo. At the VETS, February's net income variance was (\$17,439) to budget and (\$18,210) to the previous year. Mr. McCarvill stated that year to date net income variance was (\$97,778) to budget but \$3,983 to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill stated the period loss was mainly attributed to the loss of the originally planned Nutcracker event due to delays in set design. The program mix is getting better and the balance of the year looks promising. Mr. McCarvill reported that for the month of February the Dunkin' Donuts Center's net income variance was (\$233,861) to budget and (\$114,586) to the prior year. Year to date net income variance at the Dunk was (\$352,492) to budget and \$326,643 to the**

prior year. Mr. McCarvill said that the Dunkin' Donuts Center's loss for the period was due to unfavorable Ticketmaster rebates. Mr. McCarvill asserted that he remains hopeful that with robust ticket sales by Providence Sports and Entertainment and the exploration of possible new events the Dunkin' Donuts Center will see a positive trend upward; The RI Convention Authority's net income variance for the month of February was \$17,440 to budget and (\$52,386) to the prior year. Year to date net income variance is \$170,173 to budget and \$1,390,995 to the prior year. McCarvill stated that consolidated net income variance for the month of February was (\$457,990) to budget and (\$377,416) to the prior year. Consolidated Year to date net income variance is (\$824,860) to budget and \$1,009,250 to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill said that although events and attendance are up all venues remain almost flat to last year. Ms. Carter asked if the Vets can rely upon the return of the Nutcracker to the Vets for the next holiday season. Mr. McCarvill stated that with set design underway, the introduction of the Nutcracker on the Vets stage remains hopeful but not certain.

Mr. Nee asked why groups are cancelling. Mr. McCarvill stated that groups just decide that they can't afford the event. He also stated that we have not had any over performing events.

Mr. Bennett asked when the budget process will begin for 2014. Mr. McCarvill said that the process has already begun and that all financial people meet weekly.

**Mr. McCarvill reported that the sale of bonds went very well and that we anticipate approximately \$6 million in savings to be used for renewal and replacement.**

## **MARKETING**

**Mr. Bennett reminded the Board that this is an anniversary year for both the Dunkin' Donuts Center (40 years) and the Convention Center (20 years). Mr. Bennett said that plans are being made for a celebration of the occasion. She asked if anyone had any suggestions for the event to please let us know. Mr. Nee suggested that any marketing of this event should emphasize the economic impact that the facilities have on the community. Ms. Keough invited any and all suggestions on the celebration which will happen in November.**

**Ms. Keough reported that she has been working on making the NCAA Hockey Tournament a memorable event. She noted that there will be a reception at the Convention Center on Friday and all Commissioners are invited to attend. She said that we have invited the Governor, Mayor, all local college Athletic Directors, the press and media. Ms. Keough distributed photos of the banners that will be installed on the VETS. Ms. Carter took the opportunity to distribute a proof of the rack card that is being designed for The VETS.**

**Ms. Martha Sheridan of the PWCVB delivered a positive report regarding the current room statistics and the favorable trend upwards. Ms. Sheridan reported that we are on pace to meet this year's goal. Mr. Gunn noted that we have another event for the Attorneys General. He stated that we have had several events for this sector over the past year and congratulated the Convention Center and CVB on their hard work. Mr. McCarvill asked Ms. Sheridan to talk about the Indian group that will be here this Summer. Ms. Sheridan stated that they are a prestigious high profile group with an international component. Ms. Sheridan reported that the Mayor will greet the group. She thanked the staff at the Dunk and the Convention Center for putting this together. She said that the group has special dietary requirements and other needs unique to this event. Ms. Sheridan said that if we pull this off there is potential for other Indian events.**

**Mr. Lepore reported that there will be two NIT games played at the Dunk. He also reported that the P Bruins have made the playoffs and will continue their season helping us to close the gap.**

**Mr. McCarvill asked if there were any capital projects in the near future. Mr. Lepore stated that the sound system needs replacing and that an RFP has been issued. He also stated that we need a new basketball floor and the roof will need to be replaced in the near future. Mr. McCarvill reported that we will be going to the House for RICAP funds to finance pending projects.**

**Mr. Bennett asked Mr. Muldoon to update the Board on activity at the Convention Center. Mr. Muldoon reported that there was a lot of positive feedback on the Flower Show although attendance was lower than expected because of Sunday's weather forecast. Mr. Muldoon was pleased to note that the Convention Center is close to contracting with Fidelity for a meeting in June. Mr. Muldoon reported that the sales team is working hard to close the budget gap. He said that he had a great face to face meeting with ReMax.**

**Mr. Muldoon reported that the North Garage Fire Alarm system upgrade is nearing completion and is on target. Mr. Muldoon also reported that the new sound system should be up and running by next month. Ms. Venturini said that Ambient Sound was very accommodating to her group. Mr. McCarvill stated that the neon art on the building is failing and we are looking at solutions, possibly changing to LED. Mr. McCarvill noted that RISCA put aside \$80,000 for the upkeep of the art but that at today's interest rates the account is not performing as it once did and there are not enough funds left to repair what is there. Mr. McCarvill said that he thinks that we have the option to de-commission the art and return it to the artist. He said that we will have counsel look into it. Mr. Israel asked if LED would also have some energy savings. Mr. Muldoon said that it would.**

**Mr. Gunn asked about issues at the Pet Show. Discussion ensued regarding the event and the problems that arose because of the lack**

of some of the cats' medical records. Mr. Muldoon noted that both DEM and cat show participants might have over reacted to a request for health records. He said that subsequent conversations have calmed the participants. Mr. Muldoon said that we are moving forward with DEM so that this does not happen in the future and the show promoter stated that they will inform participants that health certificates are needed.

Mr. Schwartz reported that he is looking for more space for advertising opportunities in the building. He noted that the Spring will be busy with dance competitions, awards ceremonies and community events. Mr. Schwartz was pleased to note that the String Teachers had used the building for a competition while holding their meeting at the Convention Center. Mr. Schwartz stated that he is always searching for entertainment that fits well at the VETS. Mr. Schwartz noted that revenue is up to last year. Mr. Schwartz said that the VETs will be the venue for a Gospel Competition over the Memorial Day weekend. He also noted that there will be several graduations, a Do-Op Show and an Off Broadway Show in the near future. Mr. Schwartz stated that the Festival Ballet will be paying the amount that they owe to the facility.

Mr. Schwartz noted that the concrete is 70% complete and progress is being made. Mr. Schwartz commented that the banners will be visible from route 95 and people will see what the building is used for instead of a blank wall

**Chairman Bennett asked if there was any other business. Hearing none he asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Nee it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to adjourn at 10:25 AM**